

does not currently occur but where there is appropriate habitat. Appropriate habitat is proposed in the Recommended mitigation plan for *Solidago verna* in Craven Co., North Carolina; Havelock Bypass, R-1015.<sup>1</sup> prepared by Dr. John Stucky for NCDOT in 2006. Potential relocation sites for other PETS plant species have not been specifically identified.

Comment: “A population of the globally endangered species Quillwort is located within the project area, near White Oak River at Belgrade at the US 17 Campground on the east side of US 17. This site could be impacted by construction for the project unless the new bridge over the creek have a large span, are built away from the Quillwort, or unless there is no sedimentation or other disturbance to the population from construction on-site.”

Response: Alternative 2A which is west of this site was chosen as the LEDPA. No impacts are anticipated near the location of the Quillwort.

Comment: “A survey for the species Hooker's Milkwort should be conducted if suitable habitat still exists within the project area if suitable habitat still exists.”

Response: Updates to both the Federally Protected Species report and the PETS Survey did not reveal that suitable habitat still exists.

Comment: “A survey for the species Carolina Gopher Frog should be conducted if suitable habitat still exists within the project area.”

Response: A PETS Species update was completed and noted that based on an historic record (1954), the proposed action has the potential to impact individuals and potentially occupied habitat for Carolina gopher frog. With five additional occurrences of this species present in other locations within the Croatan national Forest the potential loss of this historic occurrence which has not been relocated should not result in a loss of viability for this species on the Croatan National Forest.

Comment: “It is strongly recommended that the NCDOT conduct biological surveys along the project corridor.”

Response: Surveys were completed for both the PETS Species Evaluation and for the Federal Protected Species Update.

**Agency: North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission**